

# Dairy/Livestock

## Groups sue Forest Service over winter grazing of sheep

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS  
Capital Press

Western Watersheds Project and WildEarth Guardians are challenging a U.S. Forest Service decision to allow fall and winter grazing of domestic sheep in the Caribou-Targhee National Forest.

The groups claim the grazing would expose a small population of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep to diseases carried by domestic sheep that would likely extirpate the wild herd.

The lawsuit — filed by Advocates for the West in U.S. District Court in Idaho — targets authorization of grazing on the Snakey Canyon and Kelly Canyon allotments west of Dubois in eastern Idaho.

The allotments are permitted to the U.S. Sheep Experiment Station, a century-old research facility that grazes sheep owned by the University of Idaho. Part of its mission is to improve the sustainability of rangeland ecosystems.

The sheep station is authorized to graze 1,200 dry ewes on the Snakey allotment from Nov. 6 through Jan. 2 and 1,000 dry ewes on the Kelly allotment from Nov. 20 through Jan. 3.

The groups have also filed a motion for a temporary restraining order to halt the grazing.

They are asking the court to order the Forest Service to close the allotments until the agency completes an assessment, initiated in 2015, to determine the environmental impacts of grazing in the area.

At issue is the possible transmission of a pathogen that causes pneumonic die-offs within bighorn populations.

The lawsuit cites court precedent acknowledging the high risk of disease transmission and the ordered or approved closures of numerous sheep allotments in Idaho.

One case resulted in the closure of 70 percent of the Payette National Forest to domestic sheep grazing, following a court-ordered analysis under the National Environmental Protection Act. That analysis determined that best management practices are not sufficient to prevent contact and disease transmission.

The groups contend authorizing domestic sheep graz-



Associated Press File

Bighorn sheep run along a steep mountainside. Two environmental groups have filed suit to stop the grazing of domestic sheep on two allotments in Eastern Idaho.

ing before the Forest Service completes its environmental analysis of the Snakey and Kelly allotments violates NEPA.

The agency is required by NEPA to “look before they leap” due to the concern of disease transmission, said Scott Lake, Idaho director for the Western Watersheds Project.

It only takes one incident of contact to wipe out an entire herd because bighorn have no natural immunity to the pathogen. They didn’t evolve with it, and it’s not endemic in the herd, he said.

“Given the size of this herd, it won’t take much to reduce the population to the level extinction is imminent,” he said.

The population in question stood at 36 in 2016 and has been as small as 13 in recent years. It only takes losing a few individuals to get to the point where the herd can’t repopulate itself, he said.

The Forest Service deemed the risk of disease transmission unacceptable in its decision on the Payette. The environmental groups are hoping the judge is going to recognize the unacceptable risk and potential for irreparable harm to the eastern Idaho herd, he said.

“We have science on our side and some precedent, too,” he said.

Both the precedent and the science behind it are questionable, said Cindy Siddoway, an industry leader, who with her husband runs a sixth-generation sheep operation of 10,000

breeding stock in the area.

The best science and best modeling available weren’t used in the Payette decision, and the Forest Service acknowledged it did not consult with everyone, she said.

The Forest Service appointed an advisory committee, which didn’t include the livestock industry, to evaluate the risk of disease transmission. And the evaluation didn’t include studies, such as those from USDA Agricultural Research Service, concluding disease transmission was unknown, she said.

District Judge Lynn Winmill ordered the committee’s report not be used in making decisions and found the Forest Service in contempt of court for failing to abide by that order.

“We really don’t have the final science on this,” Siddoway said.

It’s not black and white, she said, adding that there are bighorn die-offs in places without domestic sheep. The sheep industry believes there are other factors involved that trigger die-offs, such as stress, genes, immunity levels and bighorn carriers.

Disease transmission has occurred in research where bighorn interact with penned domestic sheep in a staged setting, but that’s not necessarily what would happen in the wild, she said.

“Just keeping them (domestic sheep) away is not going to solve the problem. We need to know what the triggers are ... why some die and some don’t,” she said.

## Dairy prices continue to be mixed

By LEE MIELKE  
For the Capital Press

**Dairy Markets**  
Lee Mielke



CME block cheddar climbed to \$1.76 per pound on Halloween but closed Friday at \$1.7150 per pound, as traders absorbed the mostly bearish September Dairy Products report, down 3 cents on the week, 18 1/2-cents below a year ago, and compares to \$1.7275 on the first trading day of October.

The barrels also finished at \$1.7150, up a penny on the week, 14 1/2-cents below a year ago, but 2 1/2-cents above their Oct. 2 perch.

The blocks dropped 2 1/4-cents Monday and plunged 6 cents Tuesday, to \$1.6325, as traders studied the GDT.

The barrels were unchanged Monday but rolled a penny and a half lower Tuesday, to \$1.70, 6 3/4-cents atop the blocks.

Dairy Market News reports that cheese demand has ebbed slightly for some Midwest cheesemakers. Western cheese production is steady, but not causing major concern. International sales are good and manufacturers hope that will help reduce inventories.

Cash butter fell to \$2.2225 last Thursday but closed Friday at \$2.2325, down 7 cents on the week and 34 cents above a year ago.

The butter slipped three-quarters Monday and lost a penny and a half

Tuesday, slipping to \$2.21, lowest price since May 10, 2017.

Cream continues to be available for Central butter producers and is finding its way to upper Midwestern churns from across the nation. Contacts suggest weakening European butter markets are bringing U.S. prices down.

Cash Grade A nonfat dry milk closed Friday at 72 cents per pound, down 3 cents on the week and 12 3/4-cents below a year ago.

The powder inched up three-quarters Monday but fell a penny and a half Tuesday, to 71 1/4-cents per pound, lowest spot price since April 12, 2016.

### GDT drops 3.5 percent

Tuesday’s Global Dairy Trade auction saw its weighted average for products offered drop 3.5 percent, following a 1.0 percent decline Oct. 17 and a 2.4 percent descent Oct. 3.

Whole milk powder led the declines, down 5.5 percent, following a 0.5 percent loss Oct. 17. Butter was down 3.6 percent following a 2.5 percent dip in the last event. Cheddar was off 2.8 percent, after inching 0.1 percent lower last time.

Skim milk powder was up 1.2 percent, after plunging

5.6 percent, and anhydrous milkfat was up 0.5 percent, after it jumped 5.2 percent last time.

FC Stone equated the GDT 80 percent butterfat butter price to \$2.4412 per pound U.S. CME butter closed Tuesday at \$2.21. GDT Cheddar cheese equated to \$1.8146 per pound U.S. and compares to Tuesday’s CME block Cheddar at \$1.6325. GDT skim milk powder averaged 82.48 cents per pound and whole milk powder averaged \$1.2937. CME Grade A nonfat dry milk price closed Tuesday at 71 1/4-cents per pound.

### Benchmark up 33 cents

The nation’s October benchmark Class III milk price climbed to \$16.69 per hundredweight, up 33 cents from September and \$1.87 above October 2016. It is the highest Class III since February 2017 and equates to \$1.44 per gallon, up from \$1.27 a year ago. The 10 month Class III average is at \$16.19, up from \$14.42 a year ago and compares to \$15.98 in 2015.

The November Class III futures contract was trading late Tuesday morning at \$16.45 and December was at \$15.45, with nothing above \$16 until September 2018.

The October Class IV price is \$14.85, down \$1.01 from September but \$1.19 above a year ago, and the lowest Class IV since May 2017. Its average stands at \$15.44, up from \$13.65 a year ago and \$13.97 in 2015.

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Exotic Animals.....	737	Seed.....	824
Farm Buildings.....	805	Services.....	664
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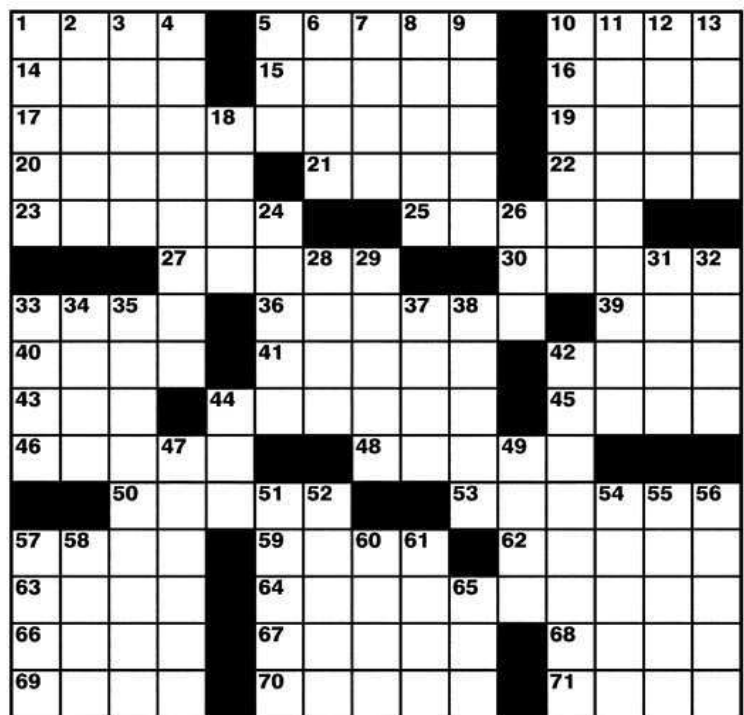


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## Newsday Crossword

IN THE GARAGE by David W. Cromer  
Edited by Stanley Newman  
www.stanxwords.com

- |                             |                              |                               |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>ACROSS</b>               | <b>DOWN</b>                  |                               |
| 1 Camera part               | 1 Tibetan priests            | 9 Gold measure                |
| 5 Demolish                  | 2 Privileged group           | 10 Informal eatery            |
| 10 Sculpted head            | 3 Canon competitor           | 11 United Kingdom flag        |
| 14 Touched down             | 4 Note taker's need, perhaps | 12 Lasting mark               |
| 15 Country home             | 5 Neighbor of Md.            | 13 Domesticated               |
| 16 Ancient Peruvian         | 6 Outer edges                | 18 Elongated lunch            |
| 17 Spillane's private eye   | 7 Blondie kid                | 24 Garden tool                |
| 19 Thailand's former name   | 8 Music-staff headers        | 26 Stress test readout: Abbr. |
| 20 Make amends              |                              | 28 Part of BTU                |
| 21 Upholstered furniture    |                              | 29 Finishes a driveway        |
| 22 Ripped up                |                              | 31 Soothing application       |
| 23 Spanish gentlemen        |                              | 32 Model maker's buys         |
| 25 Unyielding               |                              | 33 Two-band radio switch      |
| 27 Web page ad              |                              | 34 Lord's spouse              |
| 30 '70s TV detective        |                              | 35 Grade-school ritual        |
| 33 ___ Romeo (imported car) |                              |                               |
| 36 Like a clock with hands  |                              |                               |
| 39 Poetic pugilist          |                              |                               |
| 40 Hotel employee           |                              |                               |
| 41 Upholstered furniture    |                              |                               |
| 42 Edinburgh native         |                              |                               |
| 43 WWII-era leader          |                              |                               |
| 44 Can't stand              |                              |                               |
| 45 ___ out (barely manages) |                              |                               |
| 46 Dismissive shout         |                              |                               |
| 48 Merchant's booth         |                              |                               |
| 50 Minor fender flaws       |                              |                               |
| 53 Enter a parking space    |                              |                               |
| 57 Grp. for those 50+       |                              |                               |
| 59 Word of regret           |                              |                               |
| 62 Trailblazer Daniel       |                              |                               |



(See answers in Class 821)